

BENJAMIN L. CARDIN
3RD DISTRICT MARYLAND

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SENIOR WHIP

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2003

December 12, 2005

The Honorable George W. Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As Congress prepares to consider its final appropriations bill for fiscal year 2006, I am writing to urge you to support an additional \$50 million in the Defense Department appropriations bill to support the African Union mission in Sudan.

It has been nearly 17 months since Congress declared, in July 2004, that genocide was occurring in the Darfur region of Sudan. Hundreds of thousands of people have died and roughly two million people remain displaced. Civilians suffer continuous harassment, beatings, rape and murder on a daily basis, and even humanitarian camps set up for their protection are increasingly becoming the targets of violence. Each day an estimated 500 conflict-related deaths occur.

The African Union mission in Sudan (AMIS) recently stated that its operations are underfunded by more than \$150 million. This small 5,800-person mission has a mandate to monitor the cease-fire in effect but does not have adequate authority or resources to protect civilians. The mission is seeking to expand to 7,700 persons as a first step to providing better security for civilians. While the United States has pledged an additional \$50 million for AMIS, this funding was regrettably removed from the final FY '06 Foreign Operations appropriations conference report which you signed into law last month.

Mr. President, you have an opportunity to ask Congress to restore the \$50 million in funds for the AMIS in the Defense Department appropriations bill for FY '06. This amount represents only a fraction of the overall \$500 billion of spending in the bill, which will include other non-Pentagon items such as funds to combat an avian flu pandemic and to provide relief for Hurricane Katrina victims. While Congress has provided substantial humanitarian assistance to Sudan over the past two years, this small appropriation will provide critically needed funds to AMIS through the summer of 2006.

Thank you for your consideration of this urgent request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ben Cardin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ben" and last name "Cardin" clearly distinguishable.

Benjamin L. Cardin
Member of Congress

CC: Congressman Jerry Lewis, Chairman, House Appropriations Committee
Congressman David Obey, Ranking Member, House Appropriations Committee
Congressman C.W. Bill Young, Chairman, Defense Appropriations Subcommittee
Congressman John Murtha, Ranking Member, Defense Appropriations Subcommittee